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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this training workshop is to assist the participants in upgrading their delivery of services to disadvantaged Black clients. The training content is targeted toward counselors and interviewers who directly deliver counseling services. The following topics are covered: job-getting hurdles, role of the counselor; steps in the counseling process, effective listening, effective reflecting, effective interpreting, information giving, strategies for assisting the shy disadvantaged Black client, feelings of and perception of discrimination. Training is accomplished through lectures, small group discussions, and simulations. (Author/JLL)

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COUNSELING THE DISADVANTAGED BLACK CLIENT
A Higher Education Training Monograph

No. 14 in a series

Produced by:
Manpower Development Higher Education System (MDHES)
Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan

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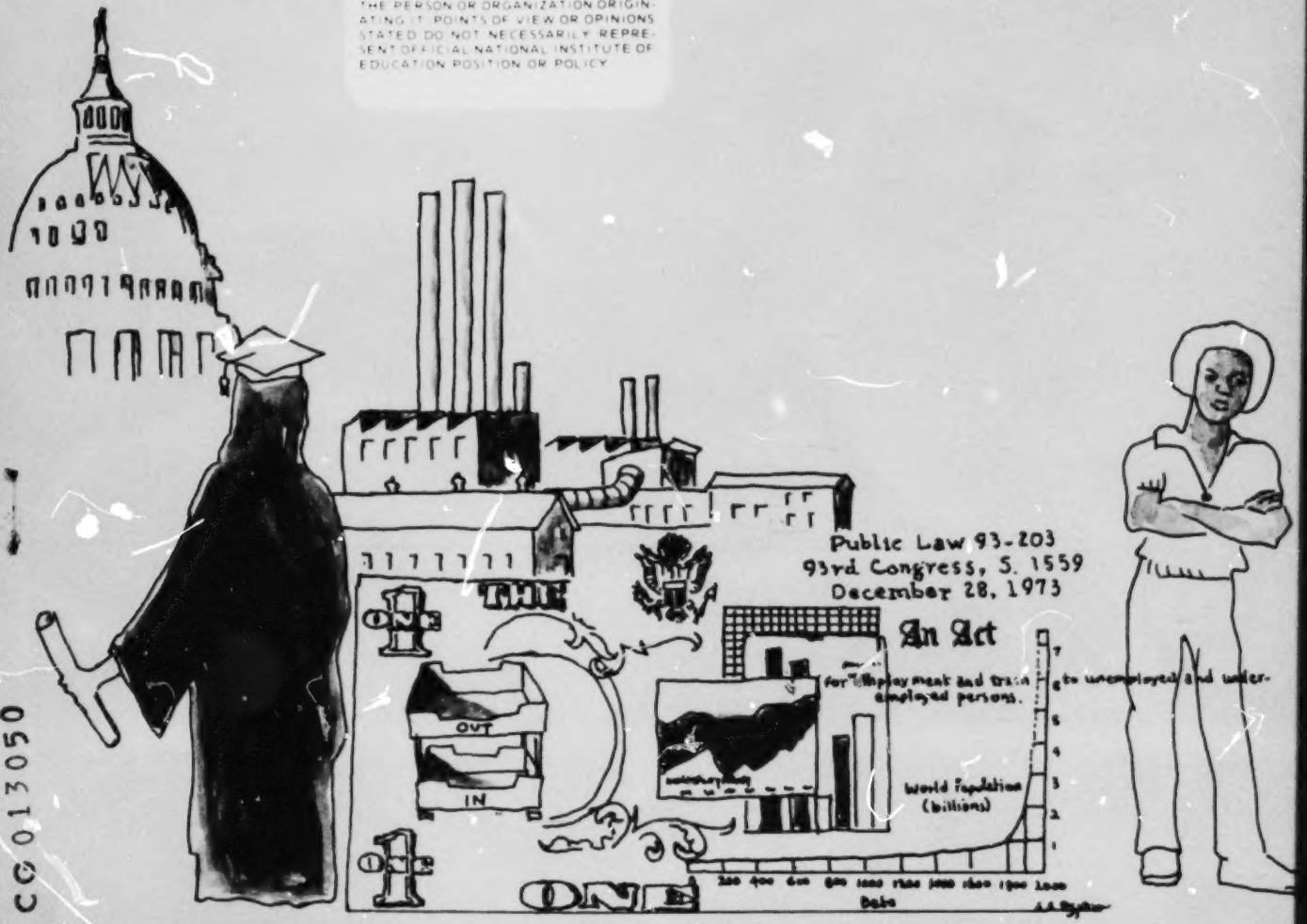

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Counseling the Disadvantaged Black Client

A Training Monograph

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The title of this monograph is Counseling Disadvantaged Black Clients. Counseling, as used here, reflects an interpersonal relationship between two or more individuals, one being a professional deliverer of helping services, and the other, a client, a recipient of such services. The objective of the counselor is to assist the client toward greater mastery of his or her environment. This environment includes relationships with home, school, work and community.

Disadvantaged, the second word in the title refers to those people in the United States who have not had the middle class stimulation and experience that prepares them to compete successfully in our society (Amos and Grambs, 1968).

Black, the third term, refers to individuals of African descent who were born and reared in this country. The word Black is used in place of Negro, Afro-American or colored, because it is a term most widely used and accepted by Blacks at this time in the United States. In addition, it carries an important psychological connotation for Blacks of pride of self and one's heritage. Negro is a term generally used by older Blacks. However, critical observers see this group increasingly using the term "Black" more often than not. "Negro" is a term white people coined to label Black people,

hence its rejection as a suitable description during the 1960's. "Colored" is not used because it has a connotation to many descendents of Africa more derogatory than Negro; it was a term derived from the French phrase "gens de couleurs" (mulatto), and suggests to Blacks the hated racial mixing inflicted upon their ancestors by white slave owners.

While this writer would concur with William E. Amos' conclusion that "Racial minority group membership in itself is a disadvantage" (Amos, 1968), nevertheless, in 1977, not all Blacks are disadvantaged. More and more Blacks are entering the middle-class mainstream of American society. Indeed, even the number of Black millionaires has increased. It would be a disservice, it seems, to perpetuate the notion on the parts of counselors from other racial groups, that all Blacks are deprived or underpriviledged. Thus, is seems appropriate to discuss counseling techniques designed to assist this special group, the disadvantaged Blacks.

Need for the Training Monograph

Counseling for many practitioners is perceived like the rose in Stein's, "A rose is a rose is a rose." It is the same, under all circumstances, for all. The underlying

assumption is that people are more alike than not. Counseling theorists have historically espoused this point of view. Sue (1976) reported that most theories of counseling share characteristics of the white middle class, which could be grouped under three categories: (a) culture-bound values; (b) class-bound values, and (c) language factors. Anybody, it is believed by proponents of each individual theory, can be assisted through using the theoretical constructs. Vontress (1971) has said, "Even though the profession has always supported the importance of recognizing the uniqueness of each individual, counselor educators have contrived to train individuals as if they would be courseling individuals who come from a society in which everybody is socially and culturally alike."

The United States is composed of a multitude of ethnic, racial and regional subcultures with which people identify and from which they derive many distinctive values and norms. Of course, each group tends to consider its way of life natural and the best way. To outsiders, strange groups, beliefs and practices are often looked upon with suspicion simply because they are different. Even though these groups are part of the society as a whole, they form distinct cultural communities. The degree to which these groups are denied full participation

in the society-at-large seems to be the extent to which they are alienated from that society. Blacks have been excluded from being part of the American melting pot, and more than that, they are the victims of a system of racism that exists throughout the United States (Institutional Racism in America, Inc., 1970; Harrington, 1967).

Notwithstanding that whites and Blacks have lived and worked side by side since they stepped foot on these shores, they are separated more today, both physically and emotionally, than ever before. In earlier centuries, even though there was a master-slave relationship, they co-existed in close physical proximity. Often during this American experience, they lived in the same houses, attended the same churches and went to the same schools.

Today, however, despite the U.S. Supreme Court's slapping down the infamous "separate but equal" doctrine, the two races are farther apart than ever. The major cities have been abandoned by whites for safety in the suburbs; school systems still remain largely all-white or all-Black; and Sunday morning church services remain just as Dick Gregory described them, "The most segregated time in America." The net result of such socio-economic-political reality is a society where whites know little of Blacks, and vice-versa.

This situation carries with it significant implications for the achievement of Department of Labor Manpower goals. Since many of the clients to be served are disadvantaged Blacks and most of the counselors are white, a wide communication-understanding chasm must be narrowed before any meaningful work can be done. Harrison has pointed out:

> With the advent of Black power and "Black is beautiful", the intensification of Black's efforts to win self-determination, and increasing Black awareness of the significance of economic, political, and social viability, some helping professionals have raised the question of whether the "oppressor" can develop meaningful repport with the "oppressed". (Harrison, 1977).

The identical question swirls in the minds of both counselor and client before they even meet. If it is never resolved by both parties, the prospects for the development of an effective counseling relationship is limited.

There is a growing body of research that indicates white counselors struggle to work successfully with minorities, especially disadvantaged Blacks (Attneau, 1972; Ruiz and Padilla, 1977; Vontress, 1971). Sue (1977) holds that this barrier to effective counseling often leads to alienation or an inability to establish rapport with the culturally different. He goes on to support the fact that Third World clients under-utilize mental health services, or prematurely terminate after an initial contact.

These reports, and others, suggest that white counselors could benefit from a greater understanding of the values and cultures of disadvantaged Blacks and from the identification of additional, more effective, strategies for delivering services to this group.

The Disadvantaged and Work

Poor and occupationally disadvantaged individuals, including Black disadvantaged persons, have great difficulty in obtaining and keeping jobs. The roots of this problem lie in their socio-economic status in society.

> For where there is lack of money with which to purchase decent housing, to buy adequate food, to pay for medical care, almost all the rest follows: powerlessness, ghettoization, inferior schooling and then inability to compete for jobs. . . (Gordon, 1968).

Repeated failure in prior social experiences may cause Blacks to see themselves as not able to hold jobs for which they are otherwise qualified. They may be reluctant to initiate training even after they have overcome their apprehension to visit the appropriate government agency, because they are certain that nothing will be available for them. These, and limiting social conditions, such as lack of role models in their family, financial and legal problems,

lack of transportation, discrimination, few job opportunities in their neighborhoods, unrealistic job requirements, and more, present almost insurmountable hurdles to the disadvantaged Black in getting and keeping a job.

The federal government has poured billions of dollars into training programs, job placement and supportive services, and almost every project has failed to really have an impact on unemployment (Oetting and Miller, 1977). Much still needs to be done to assist manpower counselors and interviewers to meet the challenge of helping the Black disadvantaged over the numerous barriers to steady employment. This training package is one small contribution to that end.

Scope of Training

This training package will require a total of fourteen hours, divided into two seven-hour days. The training content is targeted toward the counselors and interviewers who directly deliver counseling services to Black disadvantaged clients.

The trainer should be a person knowledgeable in counseling theory and process, vocational development theories, occupational information strategies, and have an intimate knowledge of the Black experience in the United States from

slavery up to the present.

Purpose and Objectives of the Training

As a result of exposure to training program content, the participants will increase service delivery skills so they are more effective with disadvantaged Black clients. At the conclusion of the training the participants will be able to:

1. Identify 8 clusters of job-getting hurdles confronting the disadvantaged Black and explain how each affects the present behavior of the client.
2. Define the role of the counselor.
3. Identify and explain the 5 steps in the counseling process.
4. Demonstrate the ability to listen effectively.
5. Demonstrate the ability to reflect feelings effectively.
6. Demonstrate the ability to interpret effectively.
7. Demonstrate the ability to give information effectively.
8. Demonstrate strategies for assisting the Shy Disadvantaged Black Client.

9. Learn how to avoid feelings the target of discrimination by the client.
10. Learn strategies to assist the client to deal effectively with perceived discrimination.

Method of Accomplishing Purposes and Objectives

Training will be accomplished through lecture, small group discussion and simulation. The training can be effectively carried out with between 15-30 participants.

Training should be carried out in a large room with moveable chairs. Dependent upon the size of the group more than one assistant could be required.

DAY I

8:30-9:00 a.m. Introduction and Background

The purpose of this training workshop is to assist the participants in upgrading their delivery of services to disadvantaged Black clients. All the studies relative to cross-cultural counseling report that in order for effective work to be done with clients of a different race, the counselor needs, in addition to the standard and traditional skills, an understanding of the client's culture and values coupled with a knowledge of specialized strategies for dealing with the particular minority.

Let it be clearly understood at the outset that this is not a workshop in racism-awareness training. That would be patently impossible to achieve given the time limitation we must consider. Anyway, programs attacking racism have had little effect on those persons who would steadfastly cling to their beliefs (Katz and Ivey, 1977).

An important assumption underlying this

training is that those counselors and interviewers who willingly continue to work at the extremely challenging task of assisting disadvantaged Black clients obtain employment, whether thay are effective or not, have a degree of personal racial awareness that does notsignificantly act as a barrier to their clients' interests.

Counseling the advantaged client is child's play when compared with working with Black disadvantaged clients. Anyone can assist a skilled or professionally-trained worker obtain a job. They have, let's face it, a lot going for them. First, they have an internalized work identification. That is, they see themselves as workers. Second, they possess a solid history of occupational success, which helps them with a needed "success expectation" when searching for work. Generally, their peers are employed and they interact with people who leave for work each day and who discuss work in the evenings. Furthermore, they feel comfortable as they move about in

the world at large. They see lots of people like them. Observing these individuals in positions of power, they have continuous exposure to occupational role models with whom to identify. The advantaged clients can take comfort in seeing people like them in positions of authority. It helps them to feel a little more secure. And let us not forget that counselors, themselves, feel at ease in the presence of advantaged clients. They are easier on the eye, they smell "right" and they can be easily understood. There is a nice kinsmanship in sharing the same cultural values and norms. Finally, there is the powerful professional pay-off that accrues to the counselor of the advantaged. The probability of this individual garnering a good job is extremely high. The client is a shoo-in to be employed. So the counselor works extra carefully, and doubly hard to ensure it, thereby adding to his or her own feelings of professional competence. However, counseling the disadvantaged Black client is work. They challenge the skills of any

counselor. Whereas practically any trained professional can successfully serve advantaged clients, it takes a special person to make an impact on the disadvantaged Black client. Typically, the disadvantaged Black client may be hostile or alienated, both with themselves and the counselor, regardless of the race of the counselor (Smith, 1970; Vontress, 1967). They may be limited by a restrictive and sub-standard language pattern (Grambs, 1965; Bernstein, 1964). They usually have high-career aspirations but low occupational expectations (Gottlieb, 1967; Henderson, 1967). During the counseling session they may be less verbal and more action-oriented (Kincaid, 1969; Calia, 1968). All these characteristics make each counseling session a demanding one for the counselor, emotionally and physically, He or she must draw upon specialized strategies in order to intervene effectively with such clients in order to achieve even a small objective.

Smith,(1977), in an excellent article, debunks some of the more commor stereotypes, identified above, under which the Black client labors, She maintains that by looking at Black client's behavior is what leads to and perpetuates much self-fulfilling unprofessional thinking by counselors. In this middle class Black writer's own experience of counseling disadvantaged Blacks of all ages in several settings, and of supervising white counselors who worked with such clients, I have seen normally closed-mouthed, reticient Blacks open up and communicate quite effectively. Contrary to stereotypic propaganda, many do express themselves quite eloquently, in their own way and not in standard English. But once the language is understood, it becomes abundantly clear that it does express a satisfactory range of thoughts, feelings and concepts.

The significant differences, it appears from this observer's experience, rests in the attitudes communicated and the specific skills utilized by the counselor.

Historically, up to the 1960's, there was no

emphasis placed on specialized strategies for working with minorities in counselor training situations. Since 1960, the number of courses whose content is designed to develop greater understanding of and delivery of services to minorities has increased, yet such efforts still do not meet the great need. As a result, few middle-class counselors, white or Black, are steeped in a broad, experientially-based training program specifically designed to impart specific knowledge of the culture, values and norms of Black people, or ways to modify traditional counseling interview behavior to meet the needs of this clientele.

This training workshop has as its purpose to expose the participant to experiences, specialized strategies and techniques so as to upgrade their delivery of counseling services to disadvantaged Black clients.

9:00-9:30 a.m. Structure of Training Objectives

The training will have the following objectives, each designed to achieve a specific purpose as

will be discussed.

1. Raise the levels of consciousness of the trainees as to the several critical barriers disadvantaged Blacks face in getting and subsequently advancing in jobs. This will be accomplished through a structured activity developed by this writer and will require 9 volunteer participants. After completion of the activity, the group as a whole will break off into subgroups to process what they observed and discuss any personal meanings each derived from it.
2. To clarify the role of the counselor and learn the 5 steps in the counseling process so trainees can have a systematic method of viewing their relationships with clients. This will be accomplished through lecture, discussion and modeling by the trainer.
3. To learn and demonstrate attending behaviors necessary for building an effective counseling relationship. The trainer will deliver lecturettes on each of the attending behaviors

and demonstrate each. Trainees will be divided into dyads of practical purposes.

4. To learn and demonstrate four minimum counselor competencies that are indispensible for working with their clients. This goal will be achieved through a discussion of each competency as to function and effects upon clients, demonstrationof each competency by the trainer. Trainees will be separated into groups of five for skill-building practice purposes. The trainer will rotate among groups to provide feedback.
5. To learn and demonstrate strategies for counseling clients exhibiting a major common self-defeating behavior: shyness. The trainer will deliver a lecturette and model effective, short-term counselor interventions to assist the client towards greater self-understanding. The trainees will be divided into triads consisting of counselor, client and observer, and the members of each triad will switch roles at ten-minute intervals. The trainer will rotate among the triads to provide feedback.

6. To clarify the nature of racial discrimination. Specific strategies will be discussed for assisting both trainee and clients to handle these feelings more effectively.

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #1
9:30-12:00 p.m.

EXPERIENCING BEING BLACK AND DISADVANTAGED

GOALS

1. To raise the levels of consciousness on the parts of trainees to the powerlessness and suffering in the lives of the disadvantaged Black client in order to develop greater understanding and appreciation of his or her present behavior.
2. To utilize as a reference point for subsequent workshop activities.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

1. Trainees will be able to identify at least eight significant barriers which block a disadvantaged Black client's getting and maintaining employment.
2. To allow trainees to explore their own feelings about their clients' behaviors.

OPTIMAL SIZE OF GROUP

18-25 trainees

TIME ALLOTMENT

1.	Introduction and directions	10 to 15 minutes
2.	Coaching the nine players	10 minutes

3. Activity 20 minutes
4. Discussion of feelings by players 25 minutes
5. Small group processing of activity

MATERIALS

8 - 12" x 12" poster boards, string, magic marker, 8 lengths of 6' rope, white surgical tape.

ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

Trainer's Instructions to the Group:

In most cases, counselors who work with the disadvantaged Black client have never experienced the horrors of poverty. Their knowledge comes from the media, readings and casual observations going to and from work.

Those whose job it is to work with the disadvantaged Black client in helpful ways surely have a greater appreciation of the plight of this individual than the population at large. Yet, their employment often is not based on formal training in sociological, economic and political factors affecting the lives of this type of client. Their learnings come about on-the-job, listening to the remarks of co-workers and building their own theories from their experiences at work. One wonders how many workers with the Black disadvantaged govern their thinking and counseling behaviors based upon traditional stereotypes of this client.

The activity you are about to witness or participate in is an attempt to represent in exaggerated and graphic form the almost insurmountable struggles the disadvantaged Black client confronts as he or she attempts to get a job.

What will be presented in the illustrative portrayal is based on research by Zimple (1971), the Manpower Report of the President (1968) and Miller and Oetting (1977) on barriers to employment that confront the disadvantaged. While each study developed a different grouping, or cluster, of barriers, there was a common set that surfaced. Some of these will be presented in our activity today.

As you witness the happenings portrayed before you, put yourself into the shoes of the disadvantaged Black client. Continually ask yourself several questions: How would you, given the same circumstances, neutralize the effects of one or more of the barriers? How would you cope with the cumulative effects of the barriers? Is the disadvantaged Black client behaving ineffectively at any one point in the activity? Where? What was ineffective? How would you go about it differently?

This exercise is full of activity and noise. You will be hearing what might at first seem like a mish-mash of sound. But listen carefully. You will hear important information.

At this time I want to ask for volunteers. (Note to the trainer: The effects of this activity will be more powerful if the disadvantaged Black client is a white person who has never been unemployed and who has some college, if not a degree. Furthermore, most of the people who are selected to play the barriers to employment should be white. It would provide them the opportunity to "see" the life space of the disadvantaged Black client in a different perspective, perhaps.)

We need nine people to assume different roles, for which they will be coached by my assistant,_____. Now, perhaps some might be hesitant to volunteer out of fear that they will be asked to participate in something risque, like baring a part of the anatomy that one normally does not expose in public. No such luck! We're not doing such activities today. Now, next week in Toledo.... Or, some might be a little undecided, because they think they'd have to memorize a long script, and they were never good at playing Hamlet or Ophelia. Not wanting to look silly in front of all their esteemed colleagues is something they are afraid of. Well, look at me. How do you think I feel up here!

We need somebody to play the role of the disadvantaged Black client; and somebody for each of the following barriers:

Lack of Transportation
Lack of Child Care Facilities
Legal Problems
Financial Problems
Emotional-Physical Problems
Social and Interpersonal Problems
Lack of Job Skills
Discrimination

Isn't this going to be fun? Playing the part of an inanimate object takes us back to elementary school, doesn't it? You know, when you played the exciting part of a tree. My favorite inanimate part was the role of the sun during an eclipse in the fifth grade. I still don't know why I was chosen.

(Volunteers come forward)

OK. Let's give these brave folk a big hand for having the courage to volunteer! (applause) (Volunteers leave the room with Assistant)

While they are being briefed by my assistant, let's go over a few ground rules:

1. Some of what you will see might appear, on the surface, to be humorous. I hope you will stifle any laughter. It will get in the way of the concentration and mood of the players.

2. Please do not talk to one another during the playing out of the activity. Use your mental time putting yourselves into the shoes of the disadvantaged Black client.
3. Please remain in your seats throughout the activity.
4. At the conclusion of the activity, we will let the "players" share their feelings relative to what they did with us.
5. Then we'll break into small groups to explore your feelings about the activity.

Assistant's Instructions to the Activity Participants:

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this exercise. The purpose of the activity is to graphically illustrate what forces a disadvantaged Black client has to constantly undergo, confront and wrestle with in order to obtain and keep a job.

It is easy for us consultants to lecture people on the factors inhibiting effective job-getting by the disadvantaged, and it is still easier for listeners, in the comfort of their seats, to hear it, discuss it, tsk-tsk about it, and then forget it. Hopefully, this activity will drive home with stunning impact the plight of the disadvantaged Black

client in a way not easily forgettable.

This is the setting of the activity. It takes place in "Any Urban City, USA", the disadvantaged Black client living in one part of town seeking an entry level job that is located clear across the city, near the suburbs. To achieve his goal of gaining employment, he must overcome several critical "barriers" to employment that block his progress.

Each person who is a barrier will wear the name of that barrier on a sign around his or her neck. This will let the audience know who you are. You, for example, are no longer Mary Smith. You are now known officially as "Legal Problems". (Allow each person who is a "barrier" select and put his sign around his neck.)

All of you "barriers" will have another piece of equipment, a length of rope. When your turn comes during the activity, you are to toss the loop around the neck or shoulders of the disadvantaged Black client, holding him (her) fast. (Assistant demonstrates how this is done.)

Now, each of you "barriers" have but one purpose for existence. And that is to stand in the way of this disadvantaged Black client getting a job. To this end, you will talk to him (her) and mockingly and tauntingly describe

how you act as a "barrier". (Assistant demonstrates how one talks in a "mocking" fashion.)

In order to be helpful, we have dittoed some points we would like you to make in your sneering and mocking speeches as barriers to the disadvantaged Black client.

These are guides you can use to structure your comments. (Assistant distributes handouts to each "barrier".)

(HANDOUTS)

LACK OF TRANSPORTATION

Ha ha ha! The job is miles away and you can't get there because you have no car! You don't even have bus fare in your pocket, because you haven't worked in a long-g-g time. I'll stand in your way for the rest of your life, because you never have enough money. Ha ha ha ha! I'll keep everybody from hiring you, because they'll all want to know how you'll get to work and I'll proudly scream at them--"He can't - I'm in his way! Ha ha ha ha!"

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Ha ha ha! You're not going to concentrate on what you're going to say in the interview because I'm

going to steal your mind. I'll keep whispering in your ear, over and over, reminding you that the rent is three weeks overdue and you'll be evicted if it's not paid next week! But what about the electricity? Will it be on tomorrow? And I bet they come to repossess the TV set like they promised. Ha ha ha! You'll never concentrate on getting yourself together because I'm going to always keep whispering in your ear, reminding you. . .

SOCIAL - INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

You think you will be able to concentrate on getting a good job? Don't you know you've got to have peace of mind for that? You seem to have conflicts with just about everybody. And I'll see that you continue to. Ha ha ha! Arguing and fighting with your spouse keeps your mind preoccupied, doesn't it? Battling with your upstairs neighbors over their loud parties doesn't help either does it? I'll see that if you get hired this time that you, once again, get into a fight with your boss. I'll always be with you to help you get into hot water. Ha ha ha!

LEGAL PROBLEMS

Who's going to hire you? With a police record? Never! Oh, so you won't tell them? You know they'll find out. You're on probation anyway. What if your probation officer calls them to check on you? I'll haunt you forever. You know how society feels about ex-cons, you're as welcome as cancer! I'll be your companion forever, though. I'll stay on your mind, filling up its spaces so you can never concentrate. . .

EMOTIONAL - PERSONAL PROBLEMS

You've never learned how to manage your feelings. You're shy and uncomfortable and strange. So you shut up and don't let them know what a fine person you are inside. (places a piece of tape over the disadvantaged Black client's mouth) I'm all the emotional-personal problems you have. I'm your tenseness and nervousness because you're not sure what people in power think of you. I'm your depression that comes from never seeing any hope for yourself. Ha ha ha! I'm going to stay in the back of your mind, pestering you and bothering you so you'll never feel at ease. . .

LACK OF JOB SKILLS

I'm lack of job skills, old buddy. I'm the "Big-B" the big barrier. Nobody's gonna hire you because you don't have any skills to sell. I'm poor reading skills, weak mathematics ability, and everything else you need to get a job. Yes, you start job-training programs but you always manage to come up with some reason to quit. That's okay. I love you for it. You are what keeps me alive!

DISCRIMINATION

You're the wrong color, boy (girl). I mean I won't tell you to your face, directly. That's not the way I am. But as long as you're Black, stay back. I'm gonna stand in your way like the Rocky Mountains, boy (girl). Gonna keep your mind off balance. I'll tell you we don't have anything available today. Or, I'll give you the dullest, dead-end job we got so you'll quit and go back to where you belong. Gonna make you scared to even ask for jobs after while. Can't hide, boy (girl), I'm here, with you. Always. . .I'm Discrimination. . .

LACK OF CHILD CARE
(for female disadvantaged Black client)

I'm nobody to keep your kids. Ha ha ha! I'm no relatives, no trusted neighbor, no child care facilities you can afford. I'm gonna plague you always. How can you work and take care of your young children, too? No way! It's because I'm in the way!

Are there any questions about what you are to say, and how it's to be said? (clarify, if necessary)

You will be lined up in the following order, about 4 feet apart, extending from the disadvantaged Black client towards the goal of a job:

disadvantaged Black client
lack of transportation
lack of child care (optional)
legal problems
emotional andpersonal problems
financial problems
social and interpersonal problems
lack of job skills
discrimination
10 feet
goal

As the disadvantaged Black client attempts to move past you, toss your noose around him (her) and in a loud voice deliver your passionate, leering speech to him (her).

The disadvantaged Black client will attempt to struggle on, but you continue talking to him all the while, keeping your rope on him as he goes to the next barrier.

As the next barrier speaks in a very loud voice, the previous barriers will all continue mocking and talking but in lower, yet audible voices. The sound is like a musical chorus or ensemble.

As the disadvantaged Black client goes down the line, the previous barriers will be taunting and tugging their ropes, which are around his (her) shoulders and arms, preventing any significant movement towards the goal.

Upon reaching the last barrier, discrimination, all the other barriers are behind the disadvantaged Black client, pulling and restraining as the disadvantaged Black client struggles, then, exhausted, falls down and gives up.

Assistant's Instructions to the Disadvantaged Black Client

You are to tentatively begin walking towards your goal of getting the job somewhere across town. You look at it, across the room, apprehensively. You have gone through this

many time before. And seldom have you made it to the goal of a job. But, frightened as you are, you take a deep breath and decide to put yourself through the ordeal still another time.

As you come up to each barrier and feel the loop around your shoulders, you writhe and struggle on the spot for a few moments. Then after the "barrier" has completed speaking, you slowly, against their tugs of the ropes, push on. When you get to the "emotional-personal" barrier, you will have your mouth taped, symbolizing your inability to communicate effectively. From then on you moan and try to talk as you struggle towards the goal.

You struggle through the barriers in this manner. After you reach "discrimination", you have 7 or 8 ropes pulling at you, you tire, make a few last futile attempts at forward progress, then slowly fall.

(The assistant asks for any questions and clarifies any that surface.)

(The trainer briefly explains the activity the trainees are about to witness.)

We are looking at a representative of the life of a disadvantaged Black client who lives in "Any Urban City, USA, zip code 00000".

Where he(she) is standing is the decayed inner city. On the other side of the room is the entry level job he or she wants to apply for. It is located on the outer edge of the city, near the suburbs. Standing between our client and his goal are numerous barriers that the disadvantaged must overcome.

Let the play begin. . .

(Activity 15-25 minutes)

Post-Activity Discussion

(trainer's comments)

I would like for the participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the parts they played. For example, how did it feel to be a "financial barrier"? What did you feel towards that obstacle? How did you feel about the disadvantaged Black client?

(Participants discuss their feelings for no more than 15 minutes.)

What about reactions from the audience?

(Trainees comment, ask questions, discuss.)

12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #2
1:00-2:30 p.m.

THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELOR

GOALS

To clarify the roles of the counselor, with special emphasis on intervention with disadvantaged Black clients.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to define the role of the counselor.
2. To be able to identify specialized foci for counseling Black clients.
3. To understand the steps in the counseling process in order to gain an over-all perspective of how behavior changes.

OPTIMAL SIZE OF GROUP

Any number is satisfactory.

TIME ESTIMATION

One and a half hours.

COUNSELING

Counseling is an activity where a person seeks to assist normally-functioning individuals to upgrade their abilities to master their environment. Counselors generally do not work with people who are mentally ill. This role is generally assumed by psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and social workers. The latter view the people they assist as "patient", with "illnesses" of the mind in much the same way medical doctors think of the people they deliver services to. However, counselors usually identify the objects of their services as "clients", individuals who are able to function sufficiently as to not require hospitalization. Clients of counselors suffer, from mild to severe, from problematic life situations that they seek to resolve. Traditionally, the role of the psychiatrist and psychologist has been an active hunt for pathology in the patient, seeking out areas of person deficiency. However, counseling is essentially growth-oriented, in that a primary emphasis is not on identifying and labeling areas of weakness in the person's functioning.

ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING COUNSELING

According to Okun (1976) several assumptions underlying

counseling reflect existential and behavioristic influences.

1. Individuals are capable of making choices.
2. Individuals are controlled to a certain extent by their environment, but can manage their lives more than they possibly realize.
3. Behaviors have a purpose and are directed at a goal. Individuals are constantly attempting to satisfy their own needs, ranging from basic physiological needs to more esoteric self-actualization.
4. Individuals want to feel good about themselves and always want positive reflection on their self-worth from significant people in their lives.
5. People are capable of learning new ways of behaving and unlearning present behaviors that are not self-enhancing. They are subject to environmental and internal consequences of their behavior, which serve as reinforcers.
6. Troublesome personal issues confronting individuals may come about as a result of unresolved conflicts rooted in the past about events or relationships and, even though historical information may be

needed, most irksome issues can be resolved by focusing in the present.

FIVE STEPS IN THE COUNSELING PROCESS

The goal of counseling is behavior change. That is, assisting the client to think, feel and, ultimately, behave in more positive, self-enhancing ways. It is important that counselors have a clear understanding of how the process works. Such a knowledge of the systematic way people change is necessary if the counselor's actions are to be efficiently goal-directed.

- Exploring the client's world for meaningful counseling content. Counselors need to gather pertinent data from the life of the client to identify which may be upgraded through counseling. Data that may not be pertinent include: the number of siblings, the name of the elementary school attended or the number of movies the client sees annually. Such information, while possibly interesting, may have little value in learning how the client typically interfaces with his or her environment.

- Assisting the client to identify self-defeating areas that if eliminated would help the client become a more effective person. What is there when the client interacts with his or her environment, situations or relationships, that is patently self-defeating? Does the client suffer from a fear of failure, thus he never takes a risk of a new job? Does the behavior involve a fear of rejection, hence inhibiting him or her from initiating new relationships?
- Helping the client towards greater self-understanding. In order for people to change, they, as well as the counselor, need to know what in the client's world serves to maintain the self-defeating behaviors. Could it be that because all the significant persons in the client's world are non-verbal, he or she seldom speaks spontaneously? Is it possible that the client is often late for school or work because he or she is required by peer group pressure to stay up late partying? For the client to refuse might mean painful, undesired rejection by a necessary support system.

Another element in self-understanding involves payoffs. People seldom continue behaving in any way unless they get some type of reward for doing so. It is imperative for successful counseling that these payoffs be identified and explored. The client who does not speak spontaneously, for instance, who purposely holds back, could have as an important payoff never being the center of attention - a safe situation.

- Assisting the client to establish clear goals, expressed in behavioral terms. If during counseling it has been decided by both parties that the client's tendency to behave passively verbally in structured situations, like counseling or job interviews, is self-sabotaging, then an objective needs to be mutually set to correct this. Generalized phrasing is ineffective, (e.g. "try to do better the next time".)
- Creating alternative, more self-enhancing behaviors. This is the point where the new way of acting is introduced. To discuss or explore alternatives earlier is merely simple problem solving and dooms

counseling effectiveness. The specific new behaviors need to be identified and practiced. For instance, for a client whose interpersonal relationships are poor due to a fear of being rejected, one alternative might be to tell him - or her - something different rather than "awfulizing", "They won't like me because. . .", substituting instead, "If they don't accept me, that is okay. It does not mean that I'm not a fine person. The person is probably afraid to interact with new people."

- Trying out the new, self-enhancing behaviors both in counseling and outside. It is not enough to just discuss client concerns during a session in order for growth to occur. The client must reality-test new skills learned in counseling out in the world. The true test of counseling effectiveness is whether the client behaves more effectively outside counseling. Therefore, after rehearsing the new way of behaving, the client goes out and practices the alternative behavior. Then, during the next counseling session he or she returns, gives a report, and adjustments are made, if necessary.

INTERFACE BETWEEN PERSONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELING

Vocational counseling is the process of assisting a person to find the most meaningful and satisfying job possible. Early in its development, vocational counseling was thought of as an elementary process whereby a person's interest and abilities were matched with a job (Parsons, 1909; Williamson, 1965). But throughout the 1950's and 1960's vocational theorists have explored man and work (only recently have women been emphasized) from a variety of perspectives. Occupational choice was not looked at with such naivete and simplicity as was formerly. Stages of occupational development were investigated (Ginzberg, et al, 1961), the importance of work in implementing the self-concept was studied (Super, 1953), early child-rearing practices and their effects on occupational choice were analyzed (Roe, 1957), and the concept of personality types which were elaborately structured to fit into occupational environments were developed (Holland, 1959). All these theorists, and others, sought to uncover how and why people chose certain occupations and found satisfactions in work. Such theorists form the content of Vocational Development and Occupational Information courses in universities across the country.

It is an accepted fact that it is as inappropriate as well as ineffective to separate vocational counseling from personal counseling. The two invariably must overlap. In order for a person to make an effective occupation-related decision, he or she must have a tremendous amount of self-knowledge. In addition to the traditional interests, aptitude, values and abilities, it is often helpful, if not absolutely necessary, to explore motivation, self-doubts and fears that serve to inhibit, interpersonal relationship style, and other important factors in order to assist a person to embark on a satisfying career.

BLACKS AND PERSONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELING

While great emphasis has been placed on counseling theories and strategies in helping practitioners to increase their effectiveness with clients, it has been only recently that efforts have been made to investigate ways to deliver counseling services to Blacks. Traditionally, whites have met with frustration when counseling Blacks because their training was deficient in this area. This was graphically described by Hollingshead and Redlich (1958):

> The therapists interviewed disapproved of the dominant behavior pattern in the Class V patients. They were repelled by their crude, vulgar language, their outbursts of violence, at times by their passivity and apathy, or by their acceptance of such behavior as a husband beating his wife and the wife taking the beating for granted, and their endurance of poverty and economic insecurity. The therapists were puzzled and upset over the sexual mores of their Class V patients. As a group, the psychiatrists were irritated by the patients' inability to think in their terms.

Counselors must behave in different, sometimes uncustomary ways, with a Black client. Traditional counselor behaviors of relying on empathy and genuineness or being non-directive will be met with failure more often than not. Appropriate counselor behaviors have been catalogued in several reports since the 1960's and will be discussed at the conclusion of this section.

The same situation exists relative to theories of vocational development which directly influences vocational counseling. In a recent article, June and Pringle (1977) reviewed the writings of Roe, Singer and Holland and concluded that race was largely ignored as a critical factor in developing, researching and writing about their theories. "The three theorists took <u>their</u> cultural backgrounds, personal interests and conceptions of the world as starting points and

gave little weight to other backgrounds." Williams (1972) and, later, Smith (1975) both score white theorists who generalized their vocational development findings, ignoring the Black perspective.

PRINCIPLES FOR COUNSELING DISADVANTAGED BLACK CLIENTS

1. Show Interest in the Client. Indicate your concern and commitment both verbally and non-verbally.
   - Verbally - Do not interrogate. Use open-ended questions when possible. Restate frequently, especially during the first session. Use humor when appropriate. Reinforce the behaviors that occur during counseling that you want to see continued (i.e., asking questions, clarifying).
   - Non-Verbally - Make good eye contact. Speak in an interested tone of voice. Use facial animation when talking. Smile genuinely when appropriate.
   - Other Behaviors - Do not busy yourself with reports, non-essential telephone calls, or

other activities that may be interpreted by the client to mean you feel these tasks are more important than he or she is.

2. Clarifying the Structure of the Counseling Session

Helping clients who may be in counseling, or seeing you for the first time to be comfortable, is important if they are to use the services effectively. Many disadvantaged Black client's are anxious during the first visit and will not speak spontaneously. Also, their past exposures to a variety of helpers might have been uneventful, or worse, painful, so helping them to understand what can happen to them as a result of counseling makes for additional efficiency. Points to include when discussing structure include:

- Time limits per session
- Number of visits
- Clarify the role of the counselor
- Clarify the role of the client
- Identify the services the counseling can deliver

Such structuring helps the client have realistic expectations from counseling. When there is confusion

on the part of the client as to what the experience is about, puzzlements over who does what, frustration can set in and precipitate an early termination.

3. Expect Colorful and Original Figures of Speech

4. Expect Considerable Testing of Limits

Disadvantaged Black clients seldom whole-heartedly trust any representative of the "establishment". They will size counselors up and behave in ways that will allow them to see if the counselor is for real. There are two common variations:

- Alternating provocation and passive, dependent compliance
- Coopting the counselor by "informalizing" the relationship, then making the demands on the counselor (as a friend) that the counselor (as a professional) cannot satisfy.

5. Include Opportunities for Direct Rehearsal and Coaching

Many disadvantaged Black clients are not too adept at discussing abstractions. Thus, having the client practice "doing" what has been discussed makes for more effective counseling.

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #3
2:30-4:00 p.m.

COUNSELOR ATTENDING BEHAVIORS

GOALS

To stress the critical importance of appropriate facial expressions, body movements and verbal behavior when counseling the disadvantaged Black client.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

1. To learn and demonstrate effective facial expressions during counseling.
2. To learn and demonstrate effective physical behaviors when counseling.
3. To learn and demonstrate effective verbal behaviors when counseling.

OPTIMAL SIZE OF GROUP

20-30 participants

TIME ESTIMATION

One and a half hours

COUNSELOR ATTENTIVENESS ACTIVITY

The counselor's behavior can contribute to a client's feeling safe during the counseling session. As the client feels additional security, he or she talks more. Since during the first counseling contact the disadvantaged Black client is sizing up the counselor, sometimes looking for any excuse to discontinue counseling, it is important - no, it is crucial - for the counselor to communicate attentiveness, and in so doing signal that he or she cares.

Attentiveness is communicated in three ways, according to Hackney and Nye (1973):

- Use of facial expressions
- Bodily movements
- Verbal behavior

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS: FACIAL EXPRESSION AND BODILY MOVEMENT EXERCISE

1. Pair off. Make sure there is adequate space between diads.
2. One person will be the speaker who will discuss a topic that is of importance to him or her - e.g. a real life issue you are enthusiastic about.
3. The other person will be the listener who will not respond with any facial expressions or bodily movement at all while the speaker is talking.

4. Take about 10 minutes. Don't stop before I call "time!"
5. Process. Solicit reactions from the speakers on how they felt talking. How did they feel towards the listener, etc? Discuss implications for working with disadvantaged Black clients.

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS: FACIAL EXPRESSION EXERCISE

1. The same pair of partners remain together, but reverse speaker-listener roles.
2. The speaker will discuss any topic that he or she is passionate about. Select a real-life issue you are involved in.
3. The listener will exhibit facial expressions that are the opposite of the issues presented by the speaker. To illustrate, if the speaker is talking happily, frown and look sad.
4. Take about 10 minutes. Don't stop before I call "time!"
5. Process. Solicit reactions from the speaker on how they felt talking. How did they feel about the listener, etc?

TRAINER'S INSTRUCTIONS: VERBAL BEHAVIOR EXERCISE

1. Pair off.
2. The person will be the speaker who will discuss a topic that is of interest to him or her.
3. The other person will be the "listener" who will constantly (a) interrupt the speaker often with questions or suggestions, and (b) jump in and change the subject. the "listener" is deadly serious, doesn't smile.
4. Take about 10 minutes. Don't stop before I call, "time!"
5. Process. Solicit reactions from the speakers on how they felt while talking. Did they want to continue speaking? Why not? How did they feel about the "listener"?

DAY II

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #4
9:30-11:30 a.m.

MINIMAL CORE COUNSELOR COMPETENCIES FOR COUNSELING THE DISADVANTAGED BLACK CLIENT

GOALS

1. To clarify the unusual verbal behaviors of disadvantaged Black clients in counseling.
2. To instruct on three counseling competencies that are significant when working with the disadvantaged Black client.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the basis for the sometimes unusual verbal behavior of the disadvantaged Black client.
2. To learn and be able to demonstrate effective Restatement.
3. To learn and be able to demonstrate effective Reflection of feelings.
4. To learn and be able to demonstrate effective Interpretation.
5. To learn and be able to demonstrate effective Information-Giving.

OPTIMAL SIZE GROUP

20-30 participants

TIME ESTIMATION

Two hours

BACKGROUND - VERBAL STYLE OF DISADVANTAGED BLACKS

Counselors sometimes have great difficulty in understanding the verbal behavior of disadvantaged Black clients in counseling. Indeed, their speaking behavior in almost every structured, formal situation may give cause for confusion in those lacking an appreciation for their client's early developmental exposures both at home and the community.

Because inner-city youth exist within a subculture that overlaps general American culture or language, but is not identical to it, there are subcultural language patterns not shared or understood by non-members of the subculture. The opposite is also true. There are language patterns, vocabulary and usage common to and required by the larger culture, primarily through its educational institutions, that are not shared by the subculture.

Thus, the disadvantaged Black client might be qualitatively different from the middle class in his use of spoken language; however, his use is not necessarily quantitatively different.

There is considerable evidence to indicate that in social interaction with representatives of the large culture, minority

group members become verbally inhibited. They speak less in formal situations such as in counseling sessions or job interviews, and in individual test sessions (therefore achieving lower IQ scores) (Pasamanic and Knoblock, 1955).

Jess Gordon (1968) describes a dramatic instance of this reaction when he was visiting a group of Blacks living in a small tent city in rural Alabama:

> They had been evicted from their plantation shacks for having registered to vote. I was introduced to some of the residents of the tent city by a Negro worker who, in a sense, transferred his rapport with the residents to those of us accompanying him. Our conversation was quite animated and showed no dearth of expressive verbal activity on the part of the residents, until we were intruded upon by a strange white man taking movies of the tents. He was a local resident who revealed stereotypic segregationist and paternalistic sentiments. During the period of his participation in the group conversation, the Negros spoke very little, assumed a passive expression, and gave monosyllabic answers. They stared off blankly into space, and looked "dumb" and uncomprehending, which attitude completedly disappeared with the departure of the intruder.

In lower-class homes, the verbal behaviors of mothers tend to cause children to have reduced motivation for imitating them since the words often being used are critical and aggressive (Mowrer, 1960). In addition, Deutsch (1956) observed that tasks assigned to children in lower-class homes are more likely to be motoric and thing-oriented, while those in middle-class

homes are more likely to involve verbal and conceptual processes.

Another factor in connection with the alleged non-verbal behavior of the disadvantaged is the lack of exposure to a variety of cultured stimulation, leading to a limitation in the number of concepts for which words are required as labels. Consequently, the disadvantaged have a narrow range of things and expressions to discuss.

Another important factor applies only to the disadvantaged male. His emphasis is on masculinity. Talk is feminine. So he never fully develops the ease and flexibility in using language because of what it would reveal about him to do so!

There is a considerable body of research that indicates the poor seldom focus inward on their feelings or thought processes in their talk (Gans, 1962; Riesman, 1962). Their tendencies are to describe what happened and not spend any time at all exploring their feelings and reactions to the event. This is probably due in great part to the child-rearing practices in the lower-class home, which are much less psychologically oriented then in middle-class homes. Lower-class parents tend to respond more to actions and their consequences rather than to the reason and motivation for their children's behaviors; e.g. using direct physical punishment instead of taking away love, and manipulating them with shame and guilt. These parents

want behavioral conformity and are not too concerned with the psychological conditions of their children. Consequently, the disadvantaged Black child grows up without attention to internal states, and therefore without a vocabulary for naming that which he has not learned to identify. As adults, they do not focus or discuss their feelings and emotional reactions for events.

As a result of the above, it is sometimes difficult to draw disadvantaged Black clients into meaningful discussion of their concerns. In order for effective counseling assistance to be given, it is necessary for the counselor to: (a) communicate attentiveness (which we have already dealt with), and (b) possess skill in using six core counselor competencies.

Each competency will be explained, demonstrated and illustrations of its use given. Then you will be divided into groups of five for practice purposes.

RESTATEMENT ACTIVITY

Restatement is putting what the client has said into fresh, new words and saying it back to him or her. It is a declarative statement, never a question.

RESTATEMENT EXERCISE

1. Form the trainees into a circle in their seats; trainer is in the circle, too.
2. There should be a maximum of 15 in the circle. If there are more participants, use the "fishbowl" strategy and have the others form a wider circle outside the inner one. The outside circle observes. The inner circle participates.
3. The trainer delivers "client" statements, with appropriate dramatic fervor; then trainees, starting from his left, go around, in order, restating that statement. Each uses a different statement, no copying allowed. Permit four trainees to restate. Then the trainer delivers another "client" statement, and four more trainees restate that one. And so forth, until each has had an opportunity to restate at least twice.
4. Bring any outside trainees in at this time, exchanging seats with persons in the inner circle.

Trainer's "Client" Statements to be Restated

1. If I don't get a job soon my folks are gonna murder me.
2. But it takes a lot of time to read and go to class. I never liked that. Can't I just get a job?
3. If anybody messes with me today they're in trouble. And I ain't jiving.

4. I lost my keys on the subway, somebody stole my newspaper in the cafeteria. This is going to be one helluva day.
5. Drop my friends? Leave my buddies? Are you crazy? Those dudes are important to me!
6. Don't have no money, don't have no car, don't have no job, and don't have no friends.
7. How many times do I have to come here? I mean, I'm kinda busy y'know. Do I have to come every week? I hope not!
8. When I get a job, I'm gonna save most of my money. Bet you a hundred bucks you won't find me broke anymore. No siree!

REFLECTION OF FEELING ACTIVITY

Reflection of feeling is putting into words the unspoken feelings the client is experiencing. Clients do not always label how they feel as they describe an experience; yet this is communicated through tone of voice and non-verbal behaviors, like a trembling voice, or a constant twisting of a handkerchief. Disadvantaged Black clients rarely discuss their feelings because of factors mentioned earlier, (i.e., for Black males it reflects their lack of masculinity for both sexes it reflects on lower-class child-rearing practices in which psychological states were not attended to by the parents.) It has been suggested that

counselors avoid relying heavily on strategies that would help the disadvantaged Black client "get in touch with his or her feelings" as they lack reference points for doing so. Accordingly, such an expenditure of energy probably would lead to frustration on the parts of both counselor and client. Nevertheless, allowing the client to know you understand how he is feeling without belaboring the point is effective in relationship-building.

The two functions of reflection of feelings are:

1. To validate or invalidate the counselor's hunch that the client is feeling in a certain way.
2. To communicate empathy and attentiveness to the client by letting him or her know you are "tuned into" emotions experienced.

Examples:

Cl: (distressed) I just don't know what I'm going to do if I don't get a job soon.

Co: It <u>really worries</u> you that you might not get a job quickly.

Cl: (frightened) I...I don't know if I can take that job across town. I mean. . . I don't know anybody there.

Co: It's sort of <u>scarey</u> for you to think about working in a place where you don't know anybody.

REFLECTION OF FEELING EXERCISE

1. Form the trainees into a circle in their seats; trainer is in the circle, too.
2. There should be a maximum of 15 in the circle. If there are more participants, use the "fishbowl" strategy and have the others form a wider circle outside the inner one. The outside circle observes. The inner circle participates.
3. The trainer delivers "client" statements, with appropriate dramatic fervor, then trainees, starting from the trainer's left, go around, in order, reflecting the feeling exhibited by the "client". Each trainee uses a different "feeling word" to describe the emotion. Permit four trainees to reflect feelings for each "client" statement. Then the trainer delivers another "client" statement, and four more trainees restate that one. And so forth, until each has had an opportunity to reflect feelings at least twice.
4. Bring any outside trainees in at this time, exchanging seats with persons in the inner circle.

Trainer's "Client" Statements to Have Feelings Reflected

1. (angrily) I'll never get a job! Nobody'll hire me because I'm Black!
2. (disappointed) Well. . . I didn't get the job. They said they were cutting back right now. . . I guess I'll have to try someplace else.

3. (fearfully) Me? Me go way over there and interview for a job? Me? Look at me, man. Do I look crazy?
4. (elated) I got it! They hired me! I start work on Wednesday!
5. (angry) Boy, they get to me! And my wife, too. She gets upset when I come home from these job interviews and I'm empty-handed.
6. (timidly) What if they ask me a question. . . and I don't know the answer? What. . . what if they tell me they don't need anybody else? What . . .what if I . . . I get there late?
7. (sadly) How in the hell can I concentrate? My girl just left me. I mean she took her stuff and split. No way can I think about anything else right now.
8. (confused) I wonder if I should enroll in that training program. But on the other hand, getting a good job would be cool. But, they can lay you off or cut-back, then where would I be. Maybe I ought to go into a training program. Yet when you think about it. . .

INTERPRETATION ACTIVITY

Interpreting is providing an underlying meaning for a client's behavior. Any interpretation is really no more than an educated hunch, and as such does not really have to be right on target in order to be helpful to the client. Interpretation provides "food

for thought" about behavior which the client might never have considered before. This is especially helpful for disadvantaged Black clients, who often lack information about motivation, as well as other important aspects of human behavior. Timely interpretations help bring to the counseling agenda meaningful themes to explore in helping the client towards greater self-understanding.

It is best to use the following introductory interpretation "stems" in presenting "soft" interpretation to the client: "Could it be that.. ." "It it possible that. . .?" "Try this on for size. . ." Such introductions reduce the amount of threat that might accompany exploring underlying meanings of behavior.

The function of interpretation is:

- To assist a client in understanding the underlying causes for his or her behavior.

Examples:

Cl: (agitated) And I'm always late. I wake up and find it's an hour past the time I'm supposed to be up. I'm supposed to meet the group at 4:00 P.M.--I get there at 5:30 P.M.! My girl gave me a party last week, and I was an hour and a half late for it!

Co: Could it be that you don't get to places on time because you'd really rather be someplace else instead?

Cl: Like I was saying. Ever since that interview 2 days ago, I can't sleep at night and all day long, I just go through the motions.

Co: Is it possible you are upset because you don't know how you did in the interview and you want this job badly?

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE

1. Form the trainees into a circle in their seats; trainer is in the circle, too.
2. There should be a maximum of 15 in the circle. If there are more participants, use the "fishbowl" strategy and have the others form a wider circle outside the inner one.
3. The trainer delivers "client" statements, with appropriate dramatic fervor, then trainees, starting from the trainer's left, go around, in order, interpreting the "client" statements. Each trainee makes a different interpretation Permit four trainees to interpret for each "client" statement. Then the trainer delivers another "client" statement, and four more trainees interpret that one. And so forth, until each has had an opportunity to interpret at least twice.
4. Bring any outside trainees in at this time, exchanging seats with persons in the inner circle.

Three functions of restatement are:

1. To insure the counselor heard what the client said accurately.
2. To make any adjustments in misunderstanding that have occurred.
3. To communicate empathy and attentiveness to the client by letting him or her know you are really listening - a step which is crucial for the disadvantaged Black client to develop an effective relationship.

Examples:

Cl: I haven't had a job in so long I don't know if I could work from 9 to 5 (in serious tone).

Co: Because you haven't held a steady job for such a long time you're uncertain about whether you can go a full day.

Cl: I can't stand anybody to yell at me. You know what I mean? I get mad, man! Pissed off! (angry)

Co: You want to know if I understand how angry you get when somebody yells at you.

Trainer's "Client" Statements to be Interpreted

1. This is my problem. Recently, just about wherever I go, I get into arguments with people. I mean, I don't want to, but it always seems to happen. At the drug store, I'll get into it with a clerk, at the grocery store, the butcher and I will have it out. I don't really know what's going on.
2. You've got to help me. Something weird is going on and I wanted to come see you. I've got this old '75 Plymouth and for some reason I've been bumping into something everywhere I drive. I mean, I tap light poles, scrap against fire hydrants, ride over the curb and smash into garbage cans. The car seems to have a life of its own. I'm getting scared.
3. I never finish things it seems. I've been in two job-training programs in the last five months and I quit both of them. A couple of years ago, I dropped out of high school. Just quit. I feel like I'm gonna quit the job I have now, which is a pretty decent one. What's going on with me.?
4. A few months ago, I just stopped spending money. I don't have much, but I just can't let it go. My rent's overdue, bills are piling up and I sit at home counting my bread. It actually hurts me to buy a little food. I just want to hold my money, feel it, kiss it.

11:30-1:00 p.m. Lunch

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #5
1:00-2:30 p.m.

COUNSELING THE SHY DISADVANTAGED BLACK CLIENT

GOALS

To assist trainees to understand the internal dynamics of shy people, and provide a step-by-step protocol for counseling this type of client successfully.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

To learn specific counseling strategies for assisting disadvantaged Black clients who are shy.

OPTIMAL SIZE OF GROUP

20 to 30 participants

TIME ESTIMATION

One and a half hours

BACKGROUND

In prior sections of this monograph, the psychological and sociological pressures that influence a disadvantaged Black client to be hang-backish and shy have been discussed at length. Research reports describing causation also have been identified. Probably no other personal characteristics of the disadvantaged

Black client serves to retard this type of client's job-getting success as does shyness. It prevents the person from effectively initiating job contacts, since he or she is very uncomfortable in new and different surroundings. In addition, it limits on-the-job success, because, being shy, the person does not easily build satisfactory interpersonal relationships at work. Consequently, feeling lonely, relatively friendless, and without a support system at work, it is easy to be tardy or absent often. These are classic tell-tale signs that person does not really want to be there. Therefore, helping any disadvantaged Black client be rid of the manacles of shyness will go a long way towards helping him or her obtain occupational success.

SIGNS OF SHYNESS

Observing the disadvantaged Black client closely as he or she enters the office and listening carefully to how the person speaks provides important clues that this self-defeating behavior might be present.

- Non-Verbal Clues - Does the individual make appropriate eye contact? Many shy people have great difficulty looking people in the eye. They might make eye contact only momentarily, then gaze at the floor, the wall or their hands. Does the person seem to be generally immobile? The worst thing

that could happen to a shy person is to be the focus of attention. To be under the glare of the spotlight is something that was always avoided. If the disadvantaged Black client doesn't move around in an appropriately relaxed manner, on foot as well as while seated, this could be a symptom of shyness.

- Verbal Clues - Is the client's voice extremely soft and timid? Are the words spoken hesitantly? Many chronically shy people speak very softly because they do not really want to be heard. By speaking softly, they reduce the chance of everybody present hearing them say something grossly inappropriate, still another fear to which they cling. Does the client speak very infrequently? Some shy people speak only when spoken to because by doing so, they reduce the risk of being made to feel foolish by, once again, saying something inappropriate.

THE UNCOMFORTABLE WORLD OF SHY PERSONS

Shy people do not get as much enjoyment out of living as do outgoing people. Glasser (1965) has identified some basic needs

of all humans: (a) to love and be loved and (b) to feel worthwhile. In order to satisfy these needs, there must be some degree of interaction between and among people. It is extremely difficult to feel loved if a person is seldom around other people. Likewise, in order to feel worthwhile, others must provide positive feedback in the form of praise or compliments. And this comes about as a result of doing something. People who are severely shy do not do much in order to be the objects of positive feedback. At parties or other social gatherings, where there are a number of strangers, they can be spied lurking along the walls, out of the way, inconspicuous. While others are having fun meeting and interacting with the new and different people present, shy people generally keep their seats warm, and smile a lot. They usually clamp onto a previous acquaintance and bend the person's ear for the duration of the affair, praying the person does not float away to chat with others. All of these personal characteristics apply to job settings making it a struggle for the shy person to feel at ease at work.

COUNSELING PROCEDURES

The following is a step-by-step, systematic way of helping disadvantaged Black clients who are timid and hangbackish. The procedure was developed out of the writer's own professional

experience in counseling a variety of shy clients, Black and white, youthful and mature, for both occupational as well as personal reasons. Following these steps will eliminate much trial-by-error, groping-in-the-dark behaviors, and will produce results that can be measured and observed.

1. Initiate feedback to the client for whom you feel this might be a problematic life concern. Shy people will seldom bring this up in counseling. Of course, this is because they are simply too shy. So the responsible counselor who observes the self-defeating behavior and verbal data discussed earlier, will give the client the feedback along with all the data to support the hunch.
2. Check with the client to discover if this actually is a problematic issue. This needs to be illustrated by discussing information contained in the section, "The Uncomfortable World of the Shy Person".
   - 2.A. If the client answers "no", make a decision to (a) postpone discussing this issue until later, when the client might feel safer, or (b) dropping it altogether as being a hypothesis which was rejected.
   - 2.B. If the client answers "yes", inquire if this is something he or she would like to change. It is sometimes ineffective to plunge ahead into

counseling when the client does not wish to go to work on an issue.

2.C. If the client responds with a "no, I don't want to change", you can interpret the reasons why so as to help the client understand him/herself better: (1) it is too scarey to change right now; (2) client does not know the counselor well enough right now; or (3) client feels hopeless, having been shy for so long and feels absolutely nothing can be done.

2.D. If the client answers "yes", ask the client to identify and describe a situation that is encountered frequently during the week in which he or she is more shy than desired. Possible situations include work, school, social situations, etc. If the client can come up with no situations, assist the client to search his or her world for additional life situations for possible exposure.

3. Have the client compare how he actually behaves in an identified situation with how he would ideally like to behave. Be careful to focus on behaviors, not on feelings or other ephemeral topics. (Counseling objectives

involve changing the client's behaviors first, having him act differently, and thereby desensitizing him to all the imagined fears that have been built up. His new behaviors bring him different, more positive reinforcement from others, which he will soak up. And it is at this point, that the feelings transform from negative to positive.) Some behaviors which will surface include: greater eye contact, greater speech frequency, increased initiation of interactions with others.

4. At this point, check out with the client why he does not behave like that presently. The responses from the client will be in the form of a stream of excuses or a river or fears.

- Nobody is interested in me.
- I don't talk well.
- I hate people.
- I might say the wrong thing.
- I'd say something stupid.

4.A. Help the client towards greater self-understanding through learning about the "payoffs" he receives from being shy:

- Can never be rejected, because he never initiates.
- Can never say the wrong things, and maybe be the object of laughter, because he never says anything.

- Can never feel stupid, because he never says anything.
- Does not have to expend much energy, because it takes real work to go up to a stranger and initiate a conversation, then listen to what the person says, then respond to that, etc.
- Does not have to be fearful of new people, because he does not go around them.

All these are fears with which we mortals have to contend, but not the shy person, and those are big payoffs, indeed! It is effective to purposely exaggerate your responses using extreme facial animation, gestures and voice tone. This will heighten the impact of the client's self-defeating propensity for making tiny ant hills into Rocky Mountains.

5. Clarify the label. Nobody is shy. That is an inoperable term. What the client suffers from is lack of interpersonal risk-taking. He is afraid to take a chance with people he does not know well. Check out "What would be the worst thing that would happen if you said something and people laughed? Dispute irrational thinking."

5.A. Reinforce any risk-taking the client exhibited during the session. Possible areas could include: greater eye contact with the counselor, talked more frequently, self-disclosed at a greater depth, etc. This will encourage the repetition of such behavior.

6. Identify one problematic life situation where the client can practice being more active; initiating at least once or speaking more frequently.
7. When this has been accomplished, use counseling time to practice or rehearse the new behaviors.
8. If he will not be seen in the office the following week, instruct the client to call you with a report on his homework assignment.

COUNSELING THE SHY CLIENT ACTIVITY

1. Separate trainees into traids.
2. Each triad will be composed of a counselor, a very shy client and an observer who will take notes and provide feedback.
3. Counselors are to practice using the procedures discussed and illustrated in the lecturette.

4. After each 10 minutes, the triad members shift roles. At the conclusion of the activity, all members shall have "counseled".
5. The trainer will move among groups and provide feedback.

WORKSHOP ACTIVITY #6
2:30-4:00 p.m.

DISCRIMINATION

GOALS

To heighten the awareness of trainees to the ways perceived discrimination by both counselors and clients can contaminate successful counseling efforts.

TRAINEE OBJECTIVES

1. To review experiential exposures that cause many disadvantaged Black clients to be hyper-sensitive to bias.
2. To explore reasons why counselors themselves might feel the target of perceived discrimination.
3. To outline specific strategies that both counselors and clients can use to neutralize their feelings of perceived discrimination.

OPTIMAL SIZE OF GROUP

20 to 30 participants

TIME ESTIMATION

One and a half hours

BACKGROUND

In any cross-cultural counseling, there lurks the unseen spector of discrimination that could endanger success. This

is especially true with clients such as disadvantaged Blacks.

For all the psychological and sociological factors detailed earlier in this monograph, because of so many hurtful experiences and denials of opportunities, the disadvantaged Black client often perceives discrimination behind every bush. Some have used discrimination, whether perceived or real, as handy, well-worn excuses for not getting the job in the first place; for not receiving a wished-for promotion; or for getting fired. The antennae of the disadvantaged Black clients are almost always out, searching for any signs of being treated differently. This is especially true when dealing with formal government or private-sector structures. Therefore, the behaviors of the counselor should leave little doubt in the mind of the disadvantaged Black client that the latter is highly-valued as a person.

Discrimination can contaminate counseling effectiveness in three ways. Counselors of disadvantaged Blacks ought to be able to recognize tell-tale signs and be able to work through each of these problematic areas in helpful ways.

A. Counselor feeling the target of a client's bias. Some disadvantaged Black clients are biased against non-Black counselors because of their color. The psychological dynamics causing this will not be explored here, yet

> non-Black counselors need to be aware of this phenomenon. Such client behaviors are directly informing the counselor that, "You can't help me, you're white!", or a more subtle form of simply not participating in counseling efforts at all, through always changing the subject, silence, or being overly-agreeable, are clues that client bias might be occurring.

Counselors typically cope with these happenings by either becoming angry, holding it in or expressing it, or feeling guilty and intimidated.

Rather than become angry at the client, remind yourself that this is an almost natural conditional response taught through the disadvantaged Black client's experience. In addition, remind yourself to not take such assaults personally, that all clients "dump" unresolved issues, anger included, onto their counselors.

There is certainly no need to feel guilty if you suspect a client feels you are predjudiced - - if you feel you are not. What payoffs do you receive for shouldering the past and present sins of other white people? Feeling guilty is a gross waste of your present moment mental time, and accomplishes nothing. There is another way you can more productively use your mind, and that is by helping the client explore his or her data that led to the conclusion.

Suggestions

1. "Check out" your feelings with the client by saying, "I feel you might be having difficulty working with me because of my color." Then provide your data. This behavior brings this sensitive topic out of the murky darkness of the underworld of counseling issues and places it squarely on the agenda as a bona fide issue. It is best to not wait for the client to initiate such a discussion as his or her fears might prohibit this.
2. If a client directly accused you of discrimination, request the data he used to come to that conclusion. As he produces information as to how he or she perceived your well-meaning actions, you can understand his thinking processes better. Why did he elect to label this or that behavior as motivated by predjudice? What payoffs does he get from thinking this way? Teach him how to "check out" his preceptions with others, rather than accuse. Assist him in his wording, like, "I feel you are behaving in a biased way towards me for these reasons. . ." Also, and very importantly, instruct him in the importance of timing such confrontations, especially with supervisors.

B. Client feeling the target of a counselor's bias. Whenever this situation occurs, appropriate counseling goals involve assisting the client towards developing ways of dealing with perceived discrimination. Two suggested strategies, which would apply here, too, were just discussed in the previous section.

C. Client feeling the target of discrimination at the agency where he or she is receiving help, or on the job, but unsure of whether or not to bring it up during counseling. Such a client's mind will probably be focused on what he or she wishes could be discussed instead of attending to the present counseling content under focus. This will occur when there are doubts as to where the counselor stands.

ON COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION

For Blacks, discrimination, to some degree, will be present in some of their exposures in American society. This situation has been the fate of racial minorities for hundreds of years the world over. It pains to feel judged solely on skin color. And yet, while clients can do little to change the minds of those who would discriminate, they

can modify how they react to the situation. To become livid is counter-productive to the accomplished objectives. Likewise, to withdraw into numbing resignation will not serve to get ends met. Learning to view perceived discrimination as just another obstacle which must be neutralized is the responsible and mature way of handling it. A general coolly and calmly scans the battlefield and gathers intelligence on the enemy, then prepares another battle plan to achieve victory. So disadvantaged Black clients must be taught a variety of battle plans for neutralizing perceived discrimination.

COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION ACTIVITY

1. Divide trainees into triads.
2. One person assumes the role of counselor, another the role of disadvantaged Black client (a non-Black) and the third is the observer.
3. The disadvantaged Black client feels he or she is being discriminated against on the job and wants to discuss this with the counselor.
4. The counselor and client role play, the counselor using discussion content in demonstrating effective helping. The observer takes notes for feedback to the counselor.
5. After each 10 minutes, the triad members shift roles. At the conclusion of the activity, all members should have "counseled".

6. The trainer will move among groups and provide feedback.

4:00-4:30 p.m. Review and Wrap-Up

This time will be used by the group to review the two days of training to reinforce what has been learned and to evaluate how they will use these new perceptions in better serving their clients.

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